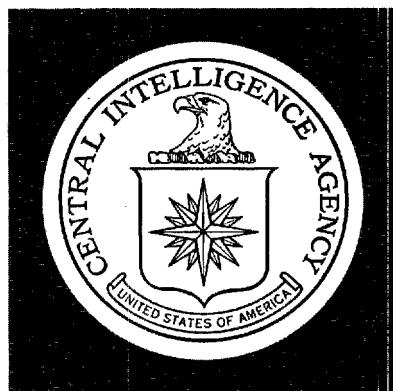


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10 February 1969



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10 February 1969

# *Central Intelligence Bulletin*

## *CONTENTS*

USSR-Malaysia: Moscow is seeking ways to expand trade between the two countries. (Page 6)

25X1

Approved For Release 2003/03/05 : CIA-RDP79T00975A013100010002-3

**Next 5 Page(s) In Document Exempt**

Approved For Release 2003/03/05 : CIA-RDP79T00975A013100010002-3

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USSR-Malaysia: The Soviet minister of foreign trade is scheduled to visit Malaysia later this month in an effort to expand trade between the two countries.

The USSR has been a leading buyer of Malaysian rubber, purchasing some \$45 million worth in the first three quarters of 1968. Malaysia's imports from the USSR over the same period have been very small. As a result Moscow is seeking ways to supply Soviet goods, probably on credit, for Malaysian development projects under Kuala Lumpur's current five-year plan.

Malaysia's concern in finding Western markets for its growing natural rubber output probably will increase its receptiveness to an expansion of economic ties with Moscow. The USSR has made several offers of aid in the past, including assistance in the construction of a major highway. This proposal currently is under consideration by the Malaysian Government.

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